



FAQs:

MAJOR CHANGES AT NANTON RECYCLING DEPOT

NANTON RECYCLING DEPOT CLOSURE (March 31st 2020) YARD WASTE & TREE DEBRIS SERVICE CONTINUES

NANTON, AB (November 22nd 2019) – At its Regular Meeting on November 18th 2019, Council gave Administration approval to proceed with closure of the Nanton and Area Recycling Depot at the end of **March 2020**.

WHY IS THIS HAPPENING?

The Recycling Depot is losing a great deal of money annually and would require a large increase to utility bill user fees or the introduction of point-of -disposal user fees to make it in any way sustainable. In 2019, there was a forecast deficit of \$34,600 that had to be covered by transfer from contingency reserve. Even with that transfer, it will end 2019 with a projected overall deficit of \$15,040. The gap between user fee revenue and operational expense is substantial (nearly - \$50,000 this year) and widening due to two principal factors:

- Curbside recycling has absorbed most of the volume that the majority of residents and businesses were previously taking to the depot;
- The market for previously valuable recycling commodities like cardboard has weakened substantially in recent years, leading to a good percentage of recyclables collected being landfilled at expense or stored outdoors. Specialized companies and large urban municipalities are also struggling with whether to store or landfill vast amounts of recycling collected across Alberta.

ARE THERE OTHER CONSIDERATIONS?

Yes. The Town has chosen to prioritize the financial sustainability of the Water and Sewer Utilities. The Recycling Centre's closure will reduce the impact of approved Water and Sewer increases:

- Savings of \$21 per year for residences
- Savings of \$60 per year for commercial/industrial

In addition, the Town's operational contingency reserves (funded by general taxation) will not be used to plug a growing revenue/ expenditure gap that cannot be resolved in the near term.

Interests in the community that need greater scale/scope services than GFL curbside collection have access to commercial recycling collectors on a fee-for-service basis. They may prefer to pay for a customized collection service than pay the Town for an increasingly expensive general depot service.

COULD IT EVER BE RE-OPENED OR RE-PURPOSED?

Yes. the Town is issuing a Request for Expressions of Interest (REOI) to accompany this release. The goal is to give community and regional interests every opportunity to express how recycling transfer at the site might continue sustainably with minimal impact to the taxpayer. The site and its improvements have known potential in the medium to long term for the establishment of a viable regional waste and recycling transfer station. This would depend on provincial or regional partnership developments with respect to wholly or partially funded **End Producer Responsibility (EPR)** programming that make such a transfer station **financially viable**.

WHAT ABOUT YARD WASTE AND TREE DEBRIS?

Should no suitable responses to this REOI be received, the Town shall, in the short term, continue providing yard waste and tree debris management for the community from the facility, with new user fees and defined, limited hours of manned operation between the months of March and October. Even though the processing of this waste is problematic at this time, **Council recognizes that this service fulfills an important function for many in the community and is committed to its continuance in some form.**

WHAT IS COUNCIL DOING TO ADDRESS THESE ISSUES IN THE LONG TERM?

Administration has recently been directed to work with the Administrations of Foothills County, High River, Black Diamond, Turner Valley and Okotoks to explore and potentially develop an agreement and implementation plan within the next three (3) months that supports the prioritization and implementation of regional opportunities for solid waste, including recycling, as outlined in the *Foothills Region Solid Waste Management Plan*. It is strongly believed that only larger scale regional or provincial approaches to recycling and composting will yield cost-effective services for municipalities large and small.

I'VE BEEN USING THE DEPOT, SO WHAT DO I DO WITH MY RECYCLING NOW?

If you have a blue recycling bin at your property and have not been using it, the Town encourages you now to do so – that service will continue. *Check the Town website for what can and cannot be recycled.*

For multi-residential and non-residential properties with larger volumes, commercial collection options available in the area will need to be privately explored and acquired by the owners/tenants.

Small commercial operators that have been using the depot for drop-off will need to explore other means by which they can transfer their collection out of Nanton and likely pass these costs on to their customers – they are encouraged to consider the REOI issued and respond.

There are two landfills in the area for the direct conveyance of recyclables (please check what they will accept before you go):

Willow Creek Regional Landfill - 13053 RR 263 south of Twp 114, M.D. of Willow Creek

Foothills Regional Landfill and Resource Recovery Centre - 434137 Hwy 783, M.D. Foothills

RECOGNIZING PAST EFFORTS BY THE COMMUNITY AT THE DEPOT

Council does want to recognize all the hard work by past volunteer groups, Councils and Town employees over the years who did their level best to make a success of the depot, raising funds for buildings and equipment from the 1990s onward. The annual support of \$10,000 from the M.D. of Willow Creek has also been appreciated. The recycling market, its sorting requirements, economies of scale and commodity values are very different today from what they were when the facility was first constructed and opened. It is hoped that new partners and ideas can be found for the site that keep elements of its original intent alive.

-Ends-

For more information:

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